Strategic partnership with RUSSIA

616. SHRI SABIR ALI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to further consolidate strategic partnership wiht Russia; and

(b) if so, the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) Yes.

(b) Rashtrapatiji will pay a State Visit to Russia in September 2009. The India-Russia Annual Summit meeting between the Prime Minister of India and the President of Russia will take place in Moscow in December 2009. The 15th session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission (IRIGC) on Trade, Economic, Scientific Technological and Cultural Cooperation, co-chaired by the External Affairs Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia will take place in Moscow in October 2009. The 9th session of the India-Russia Inter-Governmental Commission on Military Technical Cooperation (IRIGC-MTC), co-chaired by the Defence Ministers of India and Russia will take place in Moscow in October 2009. During these visits, discussions will take place with the Russian leadership on all strategic areas of bilateral cooperation with Russia such as defence, space, energy including nuclear energy, science & technology and trade & economy.

Border dispute with Nepal

†617. SHRI SHREEGOPAL VYAS: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any border dispute between India and Nepal;

(b) if so, the names of the areas and the extent of land, and the time since when it has been under dispute;

(c) the total number of check posts on Nepal border;

(d) whether there is any fencing on the border-line;

(e) whether the earlier Nepal Government had in the first instance alleged that India had encroached upon some of its land;

(f) if so, in what manner it was responded to; and

(g) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI S.M. KRISHNA): (a) and (b) Strip maps covering about ninety six percent of the India-Nepal boundary have been jointly finalised by the Joint Technical Committee (JTC) on Boundary Matters, and initialled. There are, however, differences of perception in some areas on the alignment of boundary between India and Nepal. Differences exist in areas such as Narsahi -Susta in Bihar and Kalapani in Uttarakhand. The shifting of course in Susta region of the Gandak river, the mid-stream of which formed the boundary under the Treaty of Sugauli of 1816, has resulted in claims by Nepal in this segment.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.